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Culture of peace

International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General hereby transmits the report of the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/45 of 4 December 2006.

Summary

The present report, prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/45, entitled "International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010". It follows on from the annual progress report on the Decade, also prepared by UNESCO (see A/61/175). The report presents an overview of the activities carried out by UNESCO and other United Nations entities to promote and implement the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace and contains recommendations thereon.

* A/62/50.



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I. Introduction

1. In 2006, the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) submitted the annual report of the organization on its programmes and those of other United Nations entities as regards their adherence to and implementation of the Programme of Action for the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010. In resolution 61/45, the General Assembly commended UNESCO for recognizing the promotion of a culture of peace as an expression of its fundamental mandate, and encouraged it, as lead agency for the Decade, to strengthen further the activities it had undertaken for promoting a culture of peace. By the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-second session a report on the implementation of the resolution.

II. Implementation of the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace

2. As UNESCO has been tasked with coordinating and directly implementing activities in connection with the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010, the present report contains an overview of the activities carried out by UNESCO with the participation of other United Nations entities, Governments and civil society actors. It also contains an overview of activities reported by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-LiREC). Activities are presented in eight sections, corresponding to the eight actions defined in the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace.

A. Action to foster a culture of peace through education

3. UNESCO has been furthering its peace education activities by providing support to member States to integrate a holistic vision of quality education at all levels of their educational systems. This work includes the development of textbooks and learning materials that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, both in formal and informal learning schemes of basic education; the setting up of databases on best practice, as well as the exchange of experience; the development of scientific and technological education policies in higher education, with the overall aim of contributing to poverty reduction; the promotion of inter-university solidarity for development; and rewarding outstanding examples of activities designed to promote peace education. In 2007, training materials that provide teachers with sourcebooks on key concepts in peace education, conflict management, gender-based violence and the abolition of corporal punishment have been produced and widely disseminated. Information-sharing has been supported through the convening of expert meetings and subregional workshops to bring

together key stakeholders to examine school-related gender violence, draw up recommendations for the inclusion of peace values in education policies, discuss youth violence and violence in schools and identify good practices. Research projects have also been undertaken in collaboration with UNESCO chairs, universities and research institutes. For example, a project on integrating peace and intercultural understanding in formal and non-formal education programmes in crisis-affected countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone) was implemented in coordination with the African Development Bank and the Economic Community of West African States, in close partnership with the United Nations Development Programme and United Nations Volunteers. In addition, UNESCO, in cooperation with the Government of Botswana, supported the creation of the Centre of Studies for the Culture of Peace at the University of Botswana, which will cover Southern African countries. Other examples of projects include the Ford Foundation-sponsored studies on cultural tolerance and discrimination in education policies and practices (Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru); the evaluation of an education for peace programme in Mexico City, sponsored by UNICEF and the Ministry of Education; and research on school coexistence in Chile, carried out with the Organization of Ibero-American States and the Catholic University.

4. UNESCO is currently fostering the use of information and communication technologies, such as community radio, newspaper and the Internet, in communities and schools to promote peace education on issues related to non-violence, tolerance and mutual understanding. For example, two new educational videos that explore crime and violence issues from different angles were recently produced by UNESCO, in collaboration with the Caribbean Institute of Media and Communication and the Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences at the University of the West Indies; the videos will be distributed to community media organizations in the Caribbean. UNESCO is also working to support community multimedia centres in broadcasting programmes that promote peace and non-violence, such as the ROOTS FM/ZincLink community multimedia centre in Jamaica. Over an 18-month period, the centre has engaged in a series of outside broadcasts, known as "Community Link-Up", which are designed to create an environment in which residents of inner-city communities can form alliances and friendships despite garrison political boundaries.

5. UNESCO is also developing a broadcast and Internet innovation, the Power of Peace Network, which is meant to become an independent network with a sustained global reach and presence. It is designed to support cultural self-expression through local content development; to ensure distribution, exposure and interaction; to give voice to the voiceless; and to share our diverse lives through the power of media and information tools. In parallel with content development, the initiative will launch a training programme for young producers.

6. The programmes of UNICEF reflect the need for education to promote peace and tolerance, and avoid fuelling hatred and suspicion. One particular programme that focuses on empowering young people is the UNICEF Voices of Youth programme, which gives young people from around the world an opportunity to discuss and cooperate on a range of issues related to human rights, peace education and social change. It also gives them an opportunity to participate with their peers in the Junior 8 Summit meetings, which provide the opportunity to debate the issues being discussed by the Group of Eight and come up with recommendations for the

Group's leaders. In 2006, 64 young people, 8 from each Group of Eight member country, attended the Junior 8 Summit Meeting in St. Petersburg. The young people urged the leaders of the Group to make the development and delivery of a global peace curriculum a priority issue.

7. UN-LiREC and the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean designed a project on peace, disarmament and non-proliferation education, which encompasses the development of a course for policymakers and youngsters; the exchange of experiences and lessons learned among nuclear-weapon-free zones around the world; and the preparation of audio-visual material on those zones. A video clip, entitled "Peacemaker", produced by UN-LiREC in cooperation with its partners presents a repertoire of songs interpreted by Paraguayan schoolchildren in celebration of the firearm and ammunition destruction event carried out in Paraguay in 2003, and in support of the pacific resolution of conflicts.

8. UN-LiREC and its partners also supported, for the second year in a row, an initiative aimed at complementing the celebration by Peru of its national day on 28 July with folklore and culturally inspired values. The celebration, characteristically consisting of military-style parades, used folkloric dances, sports festivals and artistic exhibitions to increase awareness of a culture of peace among the general population, in particular among the scholastic community. More than 20,000 people participated in the celebration, with 362 national educational centres, the national media, the local educational management office, and various non-governmental organizations actively involved, as was LiREC through the logistical, technical and financial support that it provided. This innovative assistance resulted in the issuance of ministerial resolution 0352-2006 which commends these alternative artistic national day celebrations and prohibits the use of toy guns or other arm replicas during the celebration of the day.

9. Within the framework of the Global Partnership Initiative for Urban Youth Development in Africa, UN-Habitat is implementing We are the Future (WAF)-One-Stop Centres in six post-conflict cities (Addis Ababa, Asmara, Freetown, Kabul, Kigali and Nablus). Viewing young people as assets for development, the initiative popularly known as WAF-One-Stop, is based on the principle of training young people (aged 15 to 24 years) living in urban areas to design and deliver youth-led activities and educational programmes for young children (aged 0 to 6+ years) and their peers. Focusing on this concept the WAF-One-Stop Centres will engage young people in developing youth-led activities and in the development of youth skills and capacity-building, while providing them with information on the WAF-One-Stop areas of emphasis (information and communication technology, health, sports and the arts). To date, UN-Habitat has undertaken scoping missions to Addis Ababa, Freetown and Kigali to engage youth and potential stakeholders in implementing the WAF-One-Stop programme.

10. ILO is working with countries, through its International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour, to progressively eliminate child labour by strengthening national capacities to address the problem and by creating a worldwide movement to combat it. Child labour is not equal to violence, but many children are exposed to violence at their places of work. A recent ILO study¹

¹ *The End of Child Labour: Within Reach* (ILO, Geneva, 2006).

estimated that 218 million girls and boys were trapped in child labour, of which 126 million were in the worst forms of child labour, which include the commercial sexual exploitation of children, pornography, trafficking, illicit activities and armed conflict. In the framework of the ILO project, activities have been undertaken in order to raise the awareness of the public of the importance of criminalizing the commercial sexual exploitation of children. As part of the ILO Global Action Plan against Child Labour, it is recommended that Governments create national plans of action for the elimination of all worst forms of child labour by 2016. Although these plans are not specific to violence against children, they encompass the combating of hazardous forms of child labour, such as sexual exploitation for commercial purposes and child trafficking, which are often intrinsically violent. ILO has also undertaken efforts to develop tools to support member States and social partners in elaborating lists of hazardous child labour, including a step-by-step document and a briefing sheet on hazardous forms of child domestic labour.

11. FAO is leading the Education for Rural People partnership (ERP), which is part of the International Alliance against Hunger and of the Education for All (EFA) initiative. Education is an essential prerequisite for reducing poverty, improving agriculture and the living conditions of rural people and building a food-secure world. ERP focuses on the need to ensure and enable an environment conducive to poverty eradication, peace and food security. Its policy focus is on engaging Governments, in collaboration with civil society in supporting investments in human resources, such as education, literacy and other skills training, which are essential elements of sustainable development. Both FAO and UNESCO are inviting member countries, international agencies and civil society to join the partnership, the main objective of which is to foster national capacities to plan and implement ERP as part of national Education for All and rural development plans. To date, there are 300 members of the partnership, including civil society organizations, Governments and international organizations. National entities such as Colombia, Kosovo and South Africa, which have been affected or are currently affected by social conflict, are all attributing great importance to ERP as a key ingredient of social cohesion and peace.

12. UNRWA has been working on eliminating all types of violence in its schools and educational institutions. This has been translated into diverse activities and programmes. For example, guidance and monitoring visits were made to UNRWA schools in Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza by senior educational specialists to discuss issues of violence and corporal punishment with several hundred teachers, students and parents. As a result, a comprehensive programme entitled "Safe and Stimulating Schools", was launched for senior and middle managers, teachers and students, with a 20-module training programme on educational, peaceful methods of interpersonal interaction. The programme represents a campaign to eliminate violent communication and corporal punishment and is being implemented in all UNRWA schools in its five areas of operation: West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon and Syrian Arab Republic. In addition, corporal punishment has been prohibited in all UNRWA schools.

B. Action to promote sustainable economic and social development

13. UNESCO is promoting dialogue and international cooperation in its areas of competence with a view to developing the foundations for a peaceful and prosperous

life for future generations. Peaceful cooperation and synergies can be advanced by focusing on water, sustainable development and human security at large. Water, with its transcultural, symbolic significance, not only has the power to unify but also to cause tension and conflict. Thus, UNESCO is working with Governments to address issues related to the prevention and resolution of water-related conflict through its "From Potential Conflict to Cooperation Potential" project. As the lead agency for the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014), UNESCO emphasizes a holistic and interdisciplinary educational approach to developing the awareness, knowledge and skills needed for a sustainable future, as well as changes in values, behaviour, production and consumption patterns, and lifestyles.

14. The role of science is important for mutual cooperation and exchange among people from different cultures, traditions and religions, especially in the context of current efforts towards strengthening sustainable development. Science, as a common heritage of humanity, has always been an impetus for dialogue and understanding among scientists of different cultural and religious backgrounds. This is demonstrated through the World Association of Young Scientists, the Israeli-Palestinian Science Organization and the SESAME (Synchrotron-light for Experimental Science and Applications in the Middle East) programme, and through the partnership of UNESCO with DaimlerChrysler to support the Mondialogo initiative, which promotes intercultural dialogue on sustainable development issues through its school contest, engineering award and intercultural Internet portal.

15. Within the framework of the follow-up of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and the implementation of the commitments made at the youth forum held during the related International Meeting, UNESCO is working with various communities in small island developing States to promote sustainable development. Within the framework of the LINKS (Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems in a Global Society) project, UNESCO is documenting and promoting the transmission of indigenous knowledge systems and establishing intercultural dialogue on new ways to ensure that such systems are recognized and respected in regard to the contribution they can make to sustainable development. Moreover, UNESCO is collaborating with the United Nations Forum on Indigenous Issues to develop tools and methodologies that make traditional knowledge systems visible to other cultures. In this regard, the organization has been associated with over 15 cultural mapping projects with indigenous communities, to equip them with the tools needed to influence decision-making in respect of their own development.

16. Young people constitute a particular target group for dialogue efforts in general and in particular with respect to sustainable development. Within the framework of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, UNESCO and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) collaborate to foster "youthXchange", an educational project focusing on sustainable consumption for young people. Themes, such as world heritage, are promoted through projects such as the Great Volga River Route project, which promotes dialogue among Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet) secondary school students from 16 countries situated along the Volga. The UNESCO Youth Forum, an integral part of sessions of the UNESCO General Conference, provides a space for young people from around the world to come together to formulate

recommendations for integration into UNESCO programmes and activities. As a follow-up to the recommendations adopted by the Fourth UNESCO Youth Forum, held during the Thirty-third General Conference in 2005, UNESCO regional forums are being organized in cooperation with national commissions and leading youth organizations on issues related to education for sustainable development and intercultural and interfaith dialogue to ensure peace.

17. UNICEF has been actively promoting the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, and has taken on the responsibility of chairing the related inter-agency committee in 2007. It has also continued to promote the Decade by working through its national committees in industrialized countries to promote education for development and to foster greater understanding of the needs of developing countries, in terms of both financial and capacity gaps.

18. UNICEF supported the participation of children and young people involved in life science projects from every region of the world in the Biovision Children's Forum, held in Lyon, France, in March 2007. The Forum afforded children and young people an opportunity to meet with prominent scientists, including Nobel laureates, and other leaders who are working on the vital life science issues facing our world today. The objective is to promote intergenerational dialogue, mutual understanding and global citizenship in areas of the life sciences, especially health, nutrition and environment.

C. Action to promote respect for all human rights

19. The specific objectives and framework for activities on human rights education are clearly laid out in the plan of action for the first phase of implementation of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. Thus, UNESCO has been providing technical assistance to member States for the development and implementation of national plans of action for human rights education in sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia and South Asia; undertaking a mapping study of human rights education in Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Thailand and Viet Nam; providing support to countries with specific needs (e.g., teacher training in Mongolia, and the development of inclusive education policies in Bangladesh and Viet Nam); designing and distributing training materials for teachers on human rights education for ASPnet and for ministries of education in francophone West African countries; publishing and distributing guidelines on integrating a human-rights based approach in education in Central Asia; organizing capacity-building subregional workshops for staff of ASPnet, UNESCO chairs, governmental officials and youth organizations, as well as school mediation workshops for teachers; promoting information exchange through the creation of a national alliance for education in human rights; and establishing partnerships with organizations such as UNICEF to design the framework for a human rights-based approach.

20. In addition to promoting the enjoyment of all human rights through education and training, UNESCO has been working to support other human rights actions related to research aimed at the elucidation of the nature and scope of the application of human rights, and the main obstacles and challenges to the realization of those rights. In addition to publishing and widely disseminating research in this area, UNESCO is also encouraging the creation of regional research and policy

networks to contribute to the development of a joint and coordinated response to regional needs and to promote human rights in policymaking. These networks bring together national human rights institutions, research centres, UNESCO chairs and the academic community in general. An example of one such network is that established in Latin America with the participation of the offices of ombudspersons in 11 countries in the region. UNESCO is also working to address the challenges associated with migration, such as human trafficking, and is encouraging multidisciplinary responses that focus on the historical, legal, political and sociocultural dimensions.

21. UNICEF is committed to applying human rights-based approaches to programming and is working with UNESCO to develop the above-mentioned framework for a human rights-based approach, which will facilitate the constitution of a network of partners for children's rights. The framework will bring together current thinking and practice on a rights-based approach in the education sector and is intended as a conceptual and programming tool that will be disseminated to countries and development partners to provide guidance on policy, planning and programme implementation in basic education. This falls within the objectives of the two agencies of achieving education for all and attaining the Millennium Development Goals of universal primary education and gender equality.

22. In an effort to set up an international dialogue on converting national budgets and fiscal policies into instruments for the realization of human rights, UNICEF hosted a conference with the theme "Eyes on the budget", which drew together delegates from other United Nations entities, member States and non-governmental organizations to discuss ways of viewing the budget as a political tool with a human rights perspective.

23. In the past 10 years, WHO has devoted substantial attention to addressing violence as a major public health problem, particularly through the Global Campaign for Violence Prevention which provides a platform for violence prevention activities that raise awareness about the problem of violence, highlight the crucial role that public health can play in addressing its causes and consequences, and encourage action at every level of society. In October 2006, WHO provided support to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in connection with the study on violence against children (see A/61/299) and the accompanying *World Report on Violence against Children*.² It has been working with UNICEF and others to help member States to implement the recommendations outlined in the report. In this regard, WHO and the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect launched *Preventing Child Maltreatment: A Guide to Taking Action and Generating Evidence*,³ a tool to help Governments to design, deliver and measure the impact of programmes for the prevention of child maltreatment and its lifelong consequences and to design, implement and evaluate prevention programmes, as well as to draw attention to important considerations for detecting and responding to child maltreatment. Furthermore, violence prevention focal points have been designated in more than 100 ministries of health, and

² The Secretary-General's study on violence against children was a joint initiative, directly supported by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNICEF and WHO. The Report was published by the United Nations in Geneva in 2006.

³ Published by WHO in cooperation with the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (Geneva, 2006).

18 countries have produced national reports on violence and health. To assist ministries of health in clarifying their role and responsibilities in relation to violence and injury prevention, WHO released the document *Preventing Injuries and Violence: A Guide for Ministries of Health*.⁴

24. In the area of human rights, UNRWA has designed training materials, developed curricula and textbooks, organized training of trainers and promoted the exchange of information in its five areas of operation. For example, the following materials have been produced: storybooks for students on basic human rights concepts; an e-learning CD with activities for students, teacher's guides and training packages on human rights education; a human rights magazine, to which students and school supervisors from all UNRWA areas have contributed; and a website to disseminate information on the UNRWA human rights programme.

25. The Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women drive the action taken by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to promote human rights and serve as the basis for its country-level programming. UNIFEM has sought to ensure that human rights standards and principles guide its programming and advocacy efforts. For example, UNIFEM is implementing a four-year programme (2004-2008) to strengthen the implementation of the Convention in South-East Asia. This programme is designed to facilitate the realization of women's human rights in the South-East Asian region through the more effective implementation of the Convention's provisions in seven countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the Philippines, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam.

26. UNIFEM continues its work on the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women, peace and security, in which the Council called upon all parties to armed conflict to respect international human rights and humanitarian law. In this regard, UNIFEM monitors the work of and engages with the Security Council, and provides technical expertise to Governments and civil society partners at headquarters and in the field with a view to strengthening accountability in regard to women, peace and security issues, including transitional justice, security sector reform and the various forms of gender-based violence.

D. Action to ensure equality between women and men

27. Capacity development through training for gender mainstreaming is one of the key methods to support the behaviour and organizational changes that are needed to effectively mainstream gender equality. In 2005, UNESCO launched a mandatory, house-wide capacity development and training programme in gender mainstreaming to improve its staff's understanding of gender concepts and the gender equality issue, and to ensure the integration of women's empowerment and gender equality perspectives in programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation. To date, four programme sectors have received training, as well as the staff of field offices in Latin America and Africa. Special training is being provided to staff of the UNESCO Iraq programme in Amman in order to ensure gender mainstreaming in conflict and post-conflict contexts.

⁴ WHO, Geneva, 2007.

28. UNESCO supports the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) by:

(a) Increasing awareness and respect for women's human rights through the worldwide dissemination of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

(b) Using sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis to reveal how policies impact differently on women and men, but also inviting women to share their experiences;

(c) Organizing conferences and other events to promote the role of women in the area of peace and security;

(d) Forging and strengthening the political will to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment at all levels, in particular through two new initiatives: the UNESCO and Sony Ericsson Women's Tennis Association (WTA) Tour global partnership, to further gender equality and promote women's leadership in all spheres of society; and the Group of Women Ambassadors for UNESCO, to promote gender equality and women's empowerment both within the organization and in member States;

(e) Implementing projects that analyse the sociocultural institutions, laws, norms, and practices that inhibit equality through a series of studies examining family laws in the Middle East and North Africa and comparing them with international instruments;

(f) Contributing to the promotion of women's involvement in peace and security at the institutional level in post-conflict countries through the establishment of women's research and documentation centres (the first such centre was inaugurated in Palestine in January 2006; a similar centre is being established in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to serve the Great Lakes region in Africa, and a third centre has been proposed for Iraq);

(g) Promoting women's participation in scientific research through the L'Oréal-UNESCO Partnership For Women in Science.

29. Violence against women is increasingly recognized as a major global public health problem. WHO is developing a framework with other partners for the identification and costing of interventions for the prevention of violence against women that can be integrated into activities for the prevention of HIV. A consultation on addressing violence against women in HIV testing and counselling convened in 2006 resulted in a report that outlines recommendations and good practices. WHO also convenes the working group on violence against women of the Global Coalition on Women and AIDS to promote advocacy and communication activities on the intersections of violence against women and HIV/AIDS.

30. In May 2007, WHO convened an international expert meeting on primary prevention of intimate partner violence and sexual violence, with a view to furthering its work in this area. The meeting reviewed current evidence of the effectiveness of approaches for preventing new occurrences of intimate partner and sexual violence, and identified potential activities and products by which WHO could advance primary prevention globally and within countries. Over the coming year, WHO will develop both a conceptual framework to guide primary prevention

efforts and advocacy materials designed to raise the awareness of policymakers in this field.

31. UNICEF is the lead agency for the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative, which supports country-led development and seeks to influence decision-making and investments as a means of ensuring gender equity and equality in national educational policies, plans and programmes. The mission of the Initiative is central to building gender equality, social justice and economic development, all of which are essential to constructing and maintaining peace in societies. The Initiative is active in the Sudan, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Eritrea, Guinea, Rwanda, Thailand and Uganda, where active United Nations peacekeeping missions and peacebuilding efforts are under way.

32. The fifty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women was devoted to the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child. To represent young people's voices at the session, UNICEF invited 18 young people from Botswana, Guatemala, Jordan, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Nepal, the Philippines, South Africa and Zambia to participate. On behalf of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) inter-agency task team on education, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and a small working group composed of members of the team (UNESCO, UNICEF, ActionAid International, Irish Aid) organized a side event for the Commission on 28 February 2007, on the theme "Girls' Education = Girl Power in the Response to HIV and AIDS", to present compelling new evidence on the link between girls' education and HIV and AIDS prevention.

33. The UNFPA Women, Peace and Security initiative focuses on following up on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). The Fund has always recognized the distinct experience of women in conflict and post-conflict settings, and not only responds to women's reproductive health needs but also makes interventions in connection with gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. In this regard, UNFPA has developed a strategy for gender mainstreaming in conflict, one of the components of which is capacity-building for non-governmental organizations to provide them with the skills needed to participate in the peacebuilding process. UNFPA conducted several national and international trainings seminars for non-governmental organizations to improve their understanding of conflict and the importance of involving women in reconstruction in the context of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

34. UNIFEM seeks to ensure equality between women and men in all of the activities carried out under its four primary areas of work (reducing feminized poverty and exclusion, promoting gender equality in democratic governance and post-conflict reconstruction, ending violence against women and halting and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS), bringing together Governments and civil society with United Nations and private sector partners to form effective partnerships and become agents for change. In all of its work, UNIFEM adopts an holistic approach, linking normative and legal frameworks with institutional reform to bring about change for women on the ground. This approach brings together efforts to: (a) formulate and implement laws and policies to promote gender equality and women's human rights; (b) build institutional capacity to allocate resources and establish accountability mechanisms to ensure implementation; (c) strengthen the

capacity of gender equality advocates to monitor and track progress and mobilize constituencies to bring about change; and (d) end harmful practices and attitudes that perpetuate gender inequality around the world.

35. In the field of gender equality, UNIFEM is working to provide technical assistance on gender-responsive budgeting at the national level, which is promoted as a means for Governments to address gender inequalities and exclusion through the examination and adjustment of budgeting and financial processes with a view to achieving gender equality. UNIFEM seeks to translate the lessons learned from gender-responsive budgeting in countries, such as Mozambique and Senegal to countries in situations of conflict and post-conflict. In Mozambique, the initiative is facilitating dialogue among women's organizations, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning and Development. It has also supported a participatory process for identifying priorities in respect of gender equality gaps and advocating for their inclusion in the poverty reduction strategy. In Senegal, the gender-responsive budgeting initiative established partnerships with the Poverty Reduction Strategy Monitoring Unit at the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Family and National Solidarity. Thanks to the strong mobilization of women's groups, gender advocates in the United Nations system and national partners, a number of gender indicators were agreed upon and incorporated into the national strategy document for the reduction of poverty. UNIFEM forged a partnership with the Ministry of Interior to mainstream gender equality into the reform of the decentralization code, and a study was undertaken to show the gaps in gender equality in the actual law and to propose recommendations for better integration of gender concerns in the new decentralization law.

E. Action to foster democratic participation

36. UNESCO has been promoting democratic governance and citizenship participation in developing countries, particularly those in post-conflict situations, by training journalists and media professionals in non-partisan and independent reporting techniques in conflict areas, with a focus on women journalists; supporting the establishment of the necessary conditions for independent media by providing expertise to national authorities seeking to adapt their media legislation to internationally recognized standards of freedom of expression, peace and tolerance; and assisting the media in covering elections.

37. Within the framework of the UNESCO programme on fostering standards and editorial independence in public service broadcasting, UNESCO supported the News Exchange (ERNO) project to reinforce the cooperation of public broadcasters in South-Eastern Europe region with a view to improving the professionalism of television news staff and to improving the quality of news stories. The objective of ERNO is to strengthen democracy and peace in South-Eastern Europe via public television. In Portuguese-speaking countries, UNESCO is supporting the creation of a television content exchange platform among public service broadcasters as a means of strengthening existing cooperation and increasing their technical capacity.

38. In June 2006, the UNICEF Executive Board adopted a post-crisis transition strategy to support the organization's medium-term strategic plan, which emphasizes that young people must actively participate in the post-crisis transition process. To support the operationalization of the strategy, the UNICEF Adolescent Development

and Participation Unit and the Transition Unit at UNICEF headquarters have developed a standard survey tool specifically for young people in post-crisis transitional contexts, which aims at assessing the needs, concerns and constructive potential of young people in transitional contexts in informing and influencing national advocacy and development plans more effectively. The plan is to integrate this tool, partially or in full, in the existing assessment and planning approaches currently used by international and national organizations in post-crisis transitional contexts. To further encourage young people's civic participation, the UNICEF East Asia Regional Office organized in Bangkok a meeting on children and young people's civic participation and citizenship with the aim of reaching agreement on key messages and concrete proposals in that regard. The messages were addressed to Governments in the region and were included in the official declaration of the Eighth East Asia and Pacific Ministerial Consultation on Children, held in Nadi, Fiji, in May 2007.

39. UNIFEM has supported women's participation in decision-making at all levels and the promotion of accountability for women's rights and gender equality in the institutions (and processes) related to conflict resolution, peacebuilding and governance. In this context, UNIFEM has used its comparative advantage to play a convening and brokering role and to build new partnerships, as well as to support women's rights movements and organizations. In addition, it has strengthened women's organizations through the establishment of safe spaces for women's capacity-building and strategy-building.

40. In the context of the UNIFEM Gender and Governance Programme, UNICEF hosted a national conference for parliamentary aspirants in Nairobi in May 2007. For the first time in Kenyan history, a gathering of more than 300 women parliamentary aspirants and incumbents from diverse backgrounds, party affiliations and constituencies from all over the country discussed strategies on how to push for a critical mass of women to be elected to parliament.

41. UNIFEM has embarked on a two-year initiative to support women in their communities in building peace and preventing sexual violence during and after conflict. The programme, entitled "Supporting women's engagement in peacebuilding and preventing sexual violence in conflict: community-led approaches", was launched during a workshop held in Lira, Uganda, in April 2007, and is funded through a US\$ 6.5 million grant from the Department for International Development, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The initiative will focus on six countries in conflict and post-conflict situations: Afghanistan, Haiti, Liberia, Rwanda, Timor-Leste and Uganda. These countries represent a wide range of conflict and post-conflict contexts, with unique opportunities and challenges. Partnerships and strategies will target multiple levels of engagement, from women's inclusion in formal peace processes to co-policing strategies in neighbourhoods, work with customary or traditional authorities, and support for services for survivors.

F. Action to advance understanding, tolerance and solidarity

42. In order to advance the work of UNESCO to promote dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, the UNESCO Executive Board, at its 174th and 175th sessions, adopted an action plan to foster better reciprocal knowledge and

understanding of cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity. Five major themes were identified for UNESCO: promoting reciprocal knowledge of cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity; building a framework for commonly shared values; strengthening quality and values education; countering violence and extremism; and fostering dialogue for sustainable development. The organization is working to implement the action plan by bringing together experts and practitioners to discuss the concept, practice and challenges related to intercultural and inter-faith dialogue. Examples include:

(a) A seminar on the theme "Intercultural dialogue and its new stakes", held in June 2006, which brought together musicians, archaeologists, historians, sociologists, writers and specialists in urban planning to analyse current debates regarding intercultural dialogue and the role of the city as a space for dialogue and diversity;

(b) An international seminar on the theme "Dialogue of cultures and civilizations: bridge between human rights and moral values", organized at UNESCO headquarters in March 2007 by the World Public Forum — Dialogue of Civilizations;

(c) An expert meeting on mainstreaming the principles of intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity in development, held at UNESCO headquarters in May 2007, to translate the principles of cultural diversity and dialogue into policy proposals, with a particular focus on education.

43. Declarations and final communiqués adopted at the various meetings highlight the need to strengthen the educational and pedagogical aspects of intercultural and interreligious dialogue. UNESCO has therefore devoted considerable attention to the important role that education and media play in changing mindsets and behavioural patterns. Recent initiatives include the campaign entitled "Breaking the silence", launched jointly by the Slave Route Project and ASPnet, the revision of school textbooks in order to reduce stereotyping and discrimination (Slave Route Project and Mediterranean Programme), the production of pedagogical tools to promote reciprocal knowledge among different religious communities (Interreligious Dialogue Programme) and, finally, stimulating intercultural understanding through the UNESCO network of chairs of interreligious dialogue for intercultural understanding.

44. Since intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity are inseparable and mutually dependant, the organization has been promoting cultural diversity by assisting member States in bolstering national cultural heritage legislation, policy and practices; working to protect, rehabilitate and safeguard heritage through advocacy, capacity-building and standard-setting; and developing sustainable cultural industries. Internationally, 2006 was marked by the entry into force of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, thus providing legal protection for the living cultural heritage.

45. UNICEF is working to promote peace and tolerance in Chechnya through the organization of summer camps for 1,000 children and young people and the training of 300 educators; providing support to mobile trainers groups to reach 20,000 schoolchildren and teachers; helping to finalize, publish and distribute a peace and tolerance encyclopaedia; revising a peace and tolerance manual for teachers and trainers of non-governmental organizations, and distributing it to 200 specialists;

supporting the Children's Peace Theatre; supporting the organization of a network of clubs of volunteers to reach 10,000 children and adolescents; and organizing a conference for 200 experts and pedagogues to share experiences in regard to peace and tolerance.

G. Action to support participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge

46. UNESCO continued to assist the development of an environment enabling free press in more than one dozen post-conflict areas and countries in transition (e.g., Afghanistan, Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Balkan countries, Liberia, Nepal, Iraq, Somalia, the Sudan and Rwanda). In Nepal, UNESCO provided technical assistance in developing the freedom of expression principle in the phase which led to the comprehensive peace agreement. The principle was integrated into that agreement. In Somalia, a project on an international programme for the development of communication facilitated the creation of the Somali Forum for Freedom of Expression, which gathers together the National Union of Somali Journalists and another 40 civil society and human rights groups from all over the country. Iraqi journalists, members of parliament and governmental officials reached an unprecedented agreement on measures to protect and promote free and pluralistic media in Iraq during a major international conference held at UNESCO headquarters in January 2007. Regarding Israel and Palestine, a first pilot peace journalism training workshop was organized in Switzerland in 2006, under the sponsorship of UNESCO and the Lassale Institute. Veteran journalists from both sides joined in the training by two peace journalism coaches from Europe, and they elaborated 10 practical steps to improve the quality of journalism, diminish concepts of the enemy and discuss solutions.

47. UNESCO is working to reduce the digital divide and to provide universal access to information and knowledge through the Information for All programme. Within the context of the programme, the organization assisted member States in developing legal and policy frameworks that promote universal access to information. Action was also targeted at implementing the outcomes of the two phases of the World Summit on the Information Society. At the local level, UNESCO has been providing a gateway to participation in the global knowledge society, especially for women and young people, seeking to ensure, through its Community Multimedia Centre programme, that information, communication and knowledge become tools for the poor to improve their lives. UNESCO has supported over 50 community multimedia centres, including those in Angola, the Great Lakes region, the Middle East, Timor-Leste and Afghanistan, thereby contributing to peacebuilding and reconciliation.

H. Action to promote international peace and security

48. UNICEF undertakes some form of mine-related actions in more than 30 countries. In Chechnya, work focused on working with schools, the mass media, teachers, counsellors and specialists on mine-risk education; developing safe youth leisure centres to provide a safe and child-friendly environment each day for about

700 children who have lost limbs; providing prosthetics to about 250 children who have lost limbs and helping them to access proper medical care; and supporting the work of the child ombudspersons' offices which are working to monitor and protect children's rights.

49. In an historic agreement between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and UNICEF, fighting was suspended and aid workers were able to conduct a "Days of Peace" campaign in conflict areas in the Philippines in order to bring immunization and other essential health services to families in 700 remote villages — services that previously have not reached them owing to the ongoing conflict in the southern Philippines.

50. To promote international peace and security by furthering efforts to engage multi-stakeholders in dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples, UNESCO consulted a range of current and potential partners and organizations with a view to building a broad-based and inclusive approach and identifying possibilities for joint action and partnerships. In this context, UNESCO has pledged to promote dialogue among political leaders in countries of South-Eastern Europe as they work to create a common vision of the future that is based on international cooperation. UNESCO assisted with the organization of a series of regional meetings in Ohrid, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (2003), Tirana (2004), Varna, Bulgaria (2005), Opatija, Croatia (2006) and Bucharest (June 2007). At the recent summit meeting in Bucharest, Heads of State and other leaders from South-Eastern Europe committed themselves to fostering in-depth cooperation in the field of culture among the countries in the region, by backing up the measures needed for protecting and promoting cultural diversity in order to properly develop integrated and international projects and duly handle the conceptual and operational strategies within the domain of inventory, preservation and enhancement of the tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

51. At the regional level, efforts were made to promote regional integration in Africa, through the participation of UNESCO in the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (Khartoum, January 2006). At that session, which was devoted to education and culture, a cooperative agreement was signed between UNESCO and the African Union, outlining joint areas of cooperation between the two entities.

52. In accordance with the Global Agenda for Dialogue among Civilizations and the related Programme of Action, and in cooperation with the Alliance of Civilizations, UNESCO will continue to explore innovative inter-agency engagements and initiatives with partners at all levels, including action related to reinforcing inter-faith dialogue. At the policy level, the organization has made particular efforts to enhance its cooperation with the Alliance of Civilizations. The Director-General of UNESCO participated in the two most recent meetings of the High-level Group established by the Alliance, in which he shared the approach and experience of UNESCO in regard to dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples. The organization is working to align its work⁵ with the recommendations

⁵ A list of UNESCO conferences and publications concerning dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples is available at http://portal.unesco.org/unesco/ev.php?URL_ID=37085&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201&reload=1176729915.

put forward in the report of the High-level Group,⁶ submitted to the General Assembly in November 2006.

53. UNESCO also participates in, and contributes to, the development of the Secretary-General's counter-terrorism strategy within the framework of the inter-agency counter-terrorism task force. This task force was established following the adoption of the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1). In its resolution 60/288, on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the General Assembly designated a key role for UNESCO in the Plan of Action annexed thereto, which referred to the promotion of dialogue and the prevention of the defamation of religious beliefs, as well as to the promotion of a culture of peace, justice and human development through inter-faith dialogue and dialogue among civilizations. As a follow-up to the adopted strategy, UNESCO assisted the task force with the development of a counter-terrorism online handbook, which will be an important tool that allows Member States, United Nations staff and accredited regional and subregional organizations to access United Nations counter-terrorism resources and identify relevant contact points. UNESCO also participated in the symposium on advancing the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, convened in Vienna in May 2007 to generate the global action required to raise awareness of the Strategy and promote its implementation, and to identify measures to assist member States in that endeavour.

III. Role of civil society

54. UNESCO is encouraging civil society to strengthen its efforts to promote a culture of peace. In 2006, on the International Day of Peace, UNESCO organized the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education Award Ceremony and the round-table meeting on the theme "Culture of peace today" to recognize both the Sri Lankan Judge Christopher Gregory Weeramantry for his work in support of the concept and culture of peace and the Fundación para la Reconciliación which received a special mention award.

55. The culture of peace was also promoted with youth-focused non-governmental organizations (260 young people shared their messages and objects of peace at UNESCO headquarters in December 2006 during the Light of Bethlehem event organized in collaboration with associations of the World Scout Movement) and with the UNESCO Centre in Turin, Italy (30 young people presented their projects at UNESCO headquarters in November 2006). UNESCO also joined with the Goi-Peace Foundation to support the 2007 International Essay Contest for Young People on the theme "The role of media and information and communication technologies in building a peaceful world".

56. The contribution of women to the peacebuilding process was highlighted on International Women's Day during an international high-level round-table meeting on "Women peacemakers" organized at UNESCO headquarters, which brought together outstanding women who work in favour of peace. Following the debate, the panellists signed a statement by women peacemakers, calling for the continued commitment of UNESCO to support and promote the full participation of women in

⁶ *Alliance of Civilizations: Report of the High-level Group, 13 November 2006* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.1.11).

peace processes, which was forwarded to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.⁷

IV. Communication and networking arrangements

57. UNESCO continued to collect and disseminate information on contributions to the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010) through the culture of peace website established during the International Year for the Culture of Peace (2000), which serves as a rallying point for Decade activities and as a resource centre, with tools that enable better promotion of the culture of peace.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

58. United Nations agencies, funds and programmes are encouraged to continue focusing their programmes on the various dimensions of the culture of peace, especially at the country level.

59. Member States for their part are encouraged to:

(a) Observe 21 September, the International Day of Peace, as a day of global ceasefire and non-violence, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/282;

(b) Implement the recommendations contained in the report of the High-level Group on the Alliance of Civilizations;⁶

(c) Increase educational efforts to develop curricula, textbooks and activities that teach cultural and religious tolerance;

(d) Ensure the access of marginalized communities to communication and information technologies to ensure the free flow of ideas so that all cultures and peoples have the ability to express themselves and to make themselves known;

(e) Urge the media, at the international and national levels, to support the global campaign for a culture of peace as well as dialogue among civilizations, cultures and peoples.

⁷ The text of the statement is available at http://portal.unesco.org/unesco/ev.php?URL_ID=37807&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201&reload=1179485045.